

VZCZCXRO3672  
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHGB #3045/01 2540843  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 110843Z SEP 07  
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3296  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 003045

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/10/2017  
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: JOINT RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS SUPPORT BAGHDAD  
SECURITY PLAN

Classified By: Baghdad PRT Team Leader Andrew Passen for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

¶1. (U) This is a Baghdad PRT reporting cable.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Joint Planning Commission (JPC) and the Joint Reconstruction Operations Center (JROC) in Baghdad are fast becoming Iraqi-driven institutions. Created to coordinate and synchronize Baghdad reconstruction efforts in support of the Baghdad Security Plan, Operation Fardh al-Qanoon, they have contributed to the diminution of violence in Baghdad. The JPC and JROC will go from being largely USG-led to completely Iraqi-led by early 2008. The JPC and JROC are the result of a coordinated effort among the Government of Iraq, Coalition Forces and the U.S. Embassy. Co-directed by an Iraqi civil engineer from the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, a Sunni who recently lost his son to terrorists, the JPC and JROC provide a common operational picture and outstanding situational awareness for reconstruction activities in Baghdad. END SUMMARY.

-----  
JPC and JROC Address Urgent Concerns  
-----

¶3. (SBU) The JPC and JROC actively identify, support and manage efforts to restore and improve essential services in Baghdad in direct support of Operation Fardh al-Qanoon (FaQ). This effort to aggressively hold areas cleared by Coalition Forces by restoring vital services and generating employment distinguishes the current surge success from past efforts to secure a sustainable peace in Baghdad.

¶4. (SBU) Created under the authority of an MNF-I Fragmentary Order (FRAGO), the JPC acts as the steering group for the JROC. The JROC, in turn, serves as the day-to-day project management operations hub that coordinates, tracks, integrates, and reports on the execution of essential services projects within the nine urban districts of Baghdad. Since their inception in August 2006, the JPC and JROC have evolved from a U.S.-led initiative to Iraqi-led, and into a sustainable part of Iraq's government infrastructure.

-----  
The JROC and JPC in Action  
-----

¶5. (SBU) The JROC has a permanent office in the International Zone (IZ) with banks of computers, map-covered walls, flat screen monitors and representation from every level of the Iraqi Government. Members include the Office of Deputy Prime Minister (DPM), the Baghdad Provincial Council, the Baghdad Amanat (city hall), the Baghdad Provincial Governor and the Directors General (DGs) from the central line ministries assigned to Baghdad province. Coalition Forces, GRD (USACE's Gulf Region Division) and the Baghdad PRT also help staff and advise the JROC. Each JPC weekly meeting targets one of the ten Baghdad security

districts. Attendees discuss progress (or lack of) for various projects in what is often a boisterous session. However, as the Baghdad PRT Team Leader (co-chair of the JPC) points out, "This is the nuts and bolts of governance capacity building."

-----  
Engineer Riadh Al-Falahi  
-----

¶6. (C) As one of the two advisors selected by Deputy Prime Minister Salaam Zobei to run the JPC, Riadh Al-Falahi, a Sunni, embodies the commitment many Iraqis are making to rebuild their country in one of the most challenging governance environments in the world. A civil engineer for more than 30 years, with a background in project management and reconstruction, Al-Falahi served as an advisor to the Baghdad Provincial Council immediately after the fall of the former regime. Not surprisingly, he says the biggest challenge he faces is security. "I am convinced that more good results could be realized if security issues did not take up such a large part of the reconstruction agenda and its budget," he said. In July 2007, his 21-year-old son, Othman, was murdered by terrorists. Othman worked for a human rights organization in the Mansour district in Baghdad, a predominantly Sunni area. Al-Falahi said the fond memories of his son and his social work were the inspiration to return to his job as the JPC coordinator two weeks after Othman's death.

¶7. (C) Al-Falahi noted that the successful coordination of Iraqi ministries, working in harmony with Coalition Forces and U.S. Embassy advisors, is his single greatest achievement. According to Al-Falahi, "Each ministry built

BAGHDAD 00003045 002 OF 003

its own empire, staffed it with political party loyalists and then conducted its business in the absence of coordination with other ministries, and other government bodies." He said that prior to the JPC, it was almost inconceivable for ministry officials, Baghdad's provincial leaders, and Iraqi contractors to hold coordination meetings on a regular basis.

After many months of trying to persuade the Ministries of Oil and Health to participate in the JPC, Al-Falahi finally succeeded by getting several representatives from these critical line ministries to participate regularly. Other ministries followed their lead.

-----  
Accomplishments of the JPC and JROC  
-----

¶8. (SBU) The true success of the JPC and JROC is the coordination that occurs among all actors implementing projects in Baghdad. JPC meetings now include representatives from all levels of the Government of Iraq; Coalition Forces leaders from MNC-I and MND-B; USACE-GRD; the Baghdad PRT; USAID; ITAO; JCCI-I; contractors and American NGOs. Iraqi security personnel from the Army and National Police (at the colonel and brigadier general levels) also attend to address questions on security and coordinate security for projects. The media also participates in the JPC sessions to inform citizens about the ongoing work of the GOI to restore and improve essential services in Baghdad.

¶9. (SBU) Al-Falahi provided a number of examples demonstrating the success of the JPC and JROC. In one case, the Ministry of Health was swayed from building a hospital in a district that already had several hospitals. Other similar cases are common. A District Council might decide to build a new school or a water treatment unit in its area through CERP-funded projects. However, the District Council, by not discussing the project first with the Ministry of Education and the Baghdad Amanat, might then have a school without teachers, salaries and textbooks and a water treatment unit that is not on the Amanat manifest for maintenance and

upkeep. "Through the JPC and JROC process," Al-Falahi states, "all these potential problems are discovered early on in the planning process and so duplication of efforts with limited resources is avoided."

¶10. (SBU) The U.S. co-chairs of the JPC and JROC agree with Al-Falahi. According to one Colonel who works with MNF-I, the JPC and JROC often operate in a similar manner to an emergency management operation of the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), although that was not the initial intention. "These two entities bring all the decision-makers needed to address the restoration of essential services together under one roof." Another Colonel who routinely attends the JPC added that one of the benefits of a group of this kind working together day in and day out is the familiarity with each other that is bred and the trust that is developed. "When there is an urgent issue in Baghdad, such as the destruction of a bridge, or an ongoing project that has stalled, the people that address the situation and marshal the necessary resources sit on the JPC and in the JROC."

-----  
Continued U.S. Support As Iraqis Take Over  
-----

¶11. (SBU) In addition to ongoing assistance from Coalition Forces and the U.S. Embassy through ITAO and the Baghdad PRT, the JPC and JROC now receive technical assistance and training from USAID's Iraq Local Governance Program (LGP). The LGP is working with Al-Falahi and the JPC and JROC staff to help build their capacity to take over and manage these operations by early 2008. Says one Baghdad PRT member, "We (the USG) have done a lot to help build the capacity and confidence of Iraqis, especially in the JPC and JROC, but there comes a time when we have to step back and let them learn the lessons they need to learn in order for them to build their own institutional memory and attain sustainability."

-----  
Coordinating Baghdad's Reconstruction Improves Baghdad's Security  
-----

¶12. (SBU) COMMENT: The handover of the JPC and JROC to the Government of Iraq is important for the long-term ability of Iraqi government officials to take on the very difficult role of addressing the immediate essential service needs of Baghdad's citizens. These entities ensure that limited resources are allocated appropriately and that reconstruction efforts are not duplicated. The success of the JPC and JROC

BAGHDAD 00003045 003 OF 003

to improve the coordination of reconstruction projects has had a positive spillover effect on other political issues such as budget execution, strategic planning and even reconciliation. Political progress on these fronts, coupled with improvements in basic services, will lead to the sustainability of any security improvements brought about by Operation Fardh al-Qanoon. Not to be overlooked, the JPC and JROC can clearly be seen as an achievement of the inter-agency community and have led to the enhanced accountability of U.S. reconstruction funds spent in Baghdad.  
END COMMENT.

BUTENIS